AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Original) Process for preparing 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)benzylalcohol which comprises reacting a 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)-phenylmagnesium halide with solid paraformaldehyde in a solvent.

2. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~wherein said solvent is an aliphatic ether.

3. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 2, ~~characterised in that~~wherein said aliphatic ether is tetrahydrofuran (THF).

4. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~wherein said solvent is a mixture of aliphatic ethers and aromatic hydrocarbons.

5. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~wherein the aliphatic ether is selected from diethyl ether, THF, methyl-THF, isobutyl-ether, dimetoxyethane (DME), diethoxyethane, diglyme, butyl-diglyme, ethyl- diglyme andtriglyme.

6. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~wherein the aromatic hydrocarbon is selected from toluene, o,m,p-xylenes, o,m,p-esafluoroxylenes and 1,3-bis(trifluoromethyl)benzene.

7. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~wherein the reaction solvent is a mixture of THF and an aromatic hydrocarbon.

8. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 7, ~~characterised in that~~wherein the reaction solvent is a mixture of THF and an aromatic hydrocarbon selected from toluene and 1,3-bis(trifluoromethyl) benzene.

9. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 7, ~~characterised in that~~wherein said mixture comprises from 20 to 60% p/p of THF.

10. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~wherein the 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)-phenylmagnesium halide is selected from 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl) - phenylmagnesium bromide and 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)-phenylmagnesium chloride.

11. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~wherein the solid paraformaldehyde is used in an approximately equimolar amount or slightly in excess with respect to the 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)-phenylmagnesium halide.

12. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 11 ~~characterised in that~~wherein the molar excess of paraformaldehyde is less than or equal to 5% with respect to the halide or 3,5-bis (trifluoromethyl)phenyl-magnesium.

13. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~wherein the reaction temperature is between 30 and 90°C.

14. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~wherein at the end of the reaction the adduct is hydrolysed with an aqueous solution of a mineral acid.

15. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 14, ~~characterised in that~~wherein said mineral acid is selected from hydrochloric acid and sulphuric acid.

16. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~wherein the 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)benzylalcohol is isolated by distillation or crystallisation.

17. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~wherein the 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)benzylalcohol obtained is used as a reagent to obtain a 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)benzyl halide.

18. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~wherein said 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)-phenyl-magnesium halide is obtained starting from the corresponding 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)-1-halobenzene by treatment with magnesium in a solvent selected from ~~the solvents quoted above~~an aliphatic ether or a mixture of an aliphatic ether with an aromatic hydrocarbon.

19. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 17, ~~characterised in that~~wherein:

(a) a 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)-phenyl magnesium halide is formed from a 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)-halobenzene in a solvent selected from the aliphatic ethers and a mixture of aliphatic ethers and aromatic hydrocarbons;

(b) solid paraformaldehyde is added to the reaction mixture thus obtained;

(c) the 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)benzylalcohol thus obtained is submitted to a halogenation reaction with HX where X is a halide, optionally in the presence of sulphuric acid;

(d) the 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)benzyl halide thus obtained is isolated.